

NEWS RELEASE

**INDIANA
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**



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Joseph E. Kernan, Governor
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Kernan energizes north central Indiana with workforce development grant

Indianapolis, Ind. – Creating greater training opportunities for Indiana workers, today Gov. Joe Kernan presented the North Central Workforce Investment Board with a \$192,508 Energizing Indiana's Workforce grant.

Awarded through the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, the North Central Workforce Investment Board (WIB) represents Cass, Fulton, Howard, Miami, Tipton and Wabash counties. It will use the grant to take a more proactive role in upgrading the skill levels of area workers.

"We are excited about the partnerships the North Central WIB is building with local business and educational communities with this grant opportunity," said Kernan. "Together, they have identified the pressing needs of local industry and have taken the steps to upgrade the skills of their local workforce."

Energizing Indiana's Workforce grants are designed to encourage the state's WIBs to create stronger links between economic and workforce development. Specifically, the funds are used to support efforts to upgrade the skills of the Hoosier workforce in the four industry sectors: life sciences, advanced manufacturing, high-tech distribution and information technology.

"These grants not only support the goals of Energize Indiana, they also support the state's workforce development initiative, Indiana@Work. By providing this funding to the WIBS, we can work together to develop programs to support the needs of our workers and employers," added Kernan.

With the funding, 11 hybrid format credit classes, which combine traditional in-class work with distance education technology, will be developed by Indiana University Kokomo and Ivy Tech Kokomo. Ivy Tech State College will also deliver a job skills enhancement training program for 525 incumbent workers. Training courses will include applied mathematics, communications, Windows, Word, Excel, and introduction to business.

"Our Workforce Investment Board is pleased to receive the Energize Indiana grant which supports initiatives identified by the local Workforce Investment Board," said Vicki Byrd, WIB director. "Education and training is key for all workers as job transitions become more common. These funds will allow North Central Indiana residents to better prepare for the changing workplace."

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Indiana@Work is comprehensive workforce development plan, announced by the governor in his State-of-the-State address. The program combines the efforts of DWD and the Indiana Department of Commerce in an effort to match jobseekers with companies that have openings. It also provides training funds to businesses, for potential employees who are facing a “skills gap” that could keep them from attaining higher-pay jobs. And, eventually, Indiana@Work will help workers develop “e-resumes” that they can carry with them throughout their careers.

Through its various programs and initiatives, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies create new jobs and improve employee skills. The agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with the state’s 27 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs and closures and operates a statewide job placement service.

For more information on this, or any other DWD program, contact Jeff Harris at 317/232-3396 or visit the web site at www.workforce.IN.gov.

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